

REMARKS

Claims 1-7, 9, 10, 12-20 and 22-26 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 14 and 24 are independent claims. By this Amendment, claims 8 and 21 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1 and 14 are amended and claims 22-26 are added. No new matter is added.

Claim Rejections

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 - Eggert

Claims 1-10 and 12-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,629,831 ("Eggert"). As claims 8 and 21 are cancelled, the rejection of those claims is moot. The rejection of claims 1-7, 9, 10, 12-20 is respectfully traversed.

Eggert fails to disclose each and every feature recited in the rejected claims. For example, Eggert fails to disclose a module service device, comprising a housing including at least one module location ... contact means arranged at the module location ... and insulating means arranged at least at one of an end and a longitudinal side on at least one of the contact means and the opposing contact means for covering the contact means on at least one of the end and the longitudinal side, as recited in independent claim 1, or a contact device at the module location and an opposing contact device on the connection module, the contact device being connectable with the opposing contact device, and an insulating device, arranged at least at one of an end and a longitudinal side on at least one of the contact device and the opposing contact device, the contact device being covered on at least one of the end and the longitudinal side by the insulating device, as recited in independent claim 14.

Eggert relates to a module control circuit with a bus conductor that includes a terminal block assembly and a modular control system. In Eggert, an electronics module 2 is removably connected by plug connections 11 to a terminal block assembly 24-27. Power from the terminal block assembly can be supplied to the control circuits carried within the electronics module 2. The electronics module 2 includes a number of guide rails 30 on two sides of the electronics module 2 that support printed circuit boards 40 arranged within the electronics module 2. The printed circuit boards 40 are guided in the guide rails 30 on the two sides of the electronics module 2 so that the printed circuit boards 40 accurately plug into the plug-in terminals 11 that protrude upwardly from the terminal blocks 27 (column 11, lines 32-40).

It is alleged in the Office Action that Eggert discloses a module device having housing (not identified in the Office Action) and a “at least one module location at 15” (reference number 15 being identified as a guide means or guide surface in Eggert for receiving corresponding T-shaped projections 19 on the housing of the electronics module 2).

It is further alleged that Eggert discloses “at least one connection module arrangeable at the module location including a connection device” (the connection module not being identified in the Office Action). Applicants note that this recitation of the claim language is incomplete as the pending claim actually recites “at least one connection module, arrangeable at the module location and including a connection device for a connectable line.” Thus, the “connectable line” feature of the claim is neither acknowledged or identified as being anticipated in Eggert.

It is next alleged in the Office Action that Eggert discloses “a contact means at 19, 8 per connection module.” However, the recitation of the claim language is incorrect and the previously recited language was “contact means per module location” and not “per connection module,” as stated in the Office Action. In other words, the described contact means must be on the housing and not on the connection module. Therefore, assuming without admission that the electronics module 2 is alleged to correspond to the unidentified connection module, then the T-shaped projection 19 cannot correspond to the “contact means per module location.” Further, the “opposing contact means” as previously claimed is per connection module (e.g. the electronics module 2) and, therefore, neither the ground terminal block 25 nor the guide means 15 that are arranged on the assembly 3 may correspond to the opposing contact means per contact module or opposing contact means arranged on the connection module, as currently recited in the amended claims.

It is next alleged in the Office Action that Eggert discloses “an insulating means arranged at least of an end and longitudinal side at 30 on at least one the contact means and the opposing means covering the contact means on at least one end of the longitudinal side at 30.” As may best be understood from the rejection, it appears that it is being alleged that the guide rails 30 correspond to the claimed insulating means. However, as shown, for example at Figs. 2 and 6 of Eggert, the guide rails 30 are not arranged at least at one of an end and a longitudinal side of the contact means (alleged to be either the T-shaped projection 19 or the input/output terminal 8).

Rather, as clearly described in Eggert, the guide rails 30 are disposed on inner walls of the electronics module 2 (Fig. 2) and receive printed circuit boards 40 so that the printed circuit

boards are accurately plugged into the plug-in terminals 11 that protrude upwardly from the terminal blocks. Accordingly, Eggert fails to disclose the features alleged in the Office Action.

In the event that any of the features not clearly identified in the Office Action and interpreted by the Applicants in the present Amendment are not considered to be accurate in the Examiner's interpretation, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection and a new Office Action issued restarting the statutory period for reply and identifying each and every feature recited in the rejected claims as they are shown and identified in the applied reference. Moreover, as several claim features are ignored and have not been clearly identified, a *prima facie* case of anticipation has not yet been established and, therefore, the outstanding Office Action should be withdrawn.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection of claims 1-10 and 12-21 under 35 U.S.C. §102 be withdrawn.

New Claims

Eggert fails to disclose each and every feature recited in claims 22-26. For example, Eggert fails to disclose or suggest an insulating means/device that covers the end and the longitudinal side of the contact means, as recited in claims 22 and 23, respectively. Moreover, Eggert fails to disclose or suggest a module service device, comprising a housing including a module connection; a contact device that protrudes from the housing at the module connection; and an insulating device arranged on the contact device, wherein the insulating device covers at least one of a longitudinal side and an end of the contact device, as recited in claims 24-26.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above remarks and amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that each of the rejections has been addressed and overcome, placing the present application in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact John W. Fitzpatrick at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By



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